

Michigan LEgwork

Department of Labor & Economic Growth

December 2004

Michigan Career & Technical Institute Celebrates 60 Years with New Building Dedication

A **NEW HISTORICAL, EDUCATIONAL** and training center partially funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation was dedicated Nov. 8 at the Michigan Career & Technical Institute (MCTI) near Plainwell. The occasion also marked the 60th anniversary of the school, founded in 1944 by W.K. Kellogg as a vocational training school for disabled World War II veterans.

"We are very pleased to celebrate six decades of serving Michigan citizens with disabilities in conjunction with the dedication of a building devoted to our school's history," said MCTI Director Dennis Hart. "We are proud of this history and want to share it with our students and the community."

Michigan Rehabilitation Services operates MCTI, which provides job training and a wide range of support services for persons with disabilities from throughout the state. It is located on Pine Lake in southwestern Barry County.

The new building has been named the Kellogg-Chapman House for W.K. Kellogg, an early benefactor of the school, and Lloyd G. Chapman, director of the school from 1957 to 1975.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation contributed \$35,000 in late 2003 to begin construction of the facility, which showcases photographs and memorabilia from the school's earlier days and the work of current MCTI students. The lakeside building, constructed around a stone fireplace and chimney dating from the 1930s, will provide expanded educational and training opportunities for MCTI students, staff and the community.

The Pine Lake Fund, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization created in 1981 to support the mission of MCTI, spearheaded a fund-raising drive and provided the leadership for making the Kellogg-Chapman House a reality. Students and staff volunteered more than 1,500 hours to build the structure.

MCTI offers training in 13 career areas: Automotive Technology, Business Support Services, Cabinetmaking, Culinary Arts, Custodial, Drafting, Electronics, Landscaping/Grounds Maintenance, Health Science, Machine Technology, Office Automation, Printing and Retail Marketing. Each training department replicates the modern industrial environment, standards and technology of that field.



Participating in the ribbon-cutting ceremony are (l. to r.): Mike Kelley, MCTI storekeeper; Bob Chapman, son of the late Lloyd Chapman; Greg Lyman, senior vice president, W.K. Kellogg Foundation; State Sen. Patricia Birkholz; State Rep. Fulton Sheen; State Rep. Gary Newell; Allan Hunt, Pine Lake Fund chairperson and assistant executive director, W.E. Upjohn Institute; Dennis Hart; and Ray Heikkila, MCTI drafting instructor.

A career assessment service is available to help students explore their career options. Remedial training in reading and math designed to help students prepare for career training is also offered.

Support services are made available to help each student meet his or her personal and training objectives. These services include psychological and career counseling, interpreters for deaf students, basic education, leisure services, classroom and job accommodations and job placement services.

MCTI is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. Its training programs are also approved by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

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A Message from the Director

During this closing month of 2004, I want to convey to every staff member in the Department of Labor & Economic Growth the sense of wonder and pride that I feel each time I read an issue of *Michigan LEGwork*. As an employee newsletter, it is filled with stories about the many good deeds and outstanding accomplishments that characterize your presence here at work and in your communities. I have even given the newsletter to my mother so that she can read about the marvelous people with whom I work.

During this fall's Michigan Harvest Gathering, you donated \$2,368 and untold numbers of canned goods and boxed food items to help provide sustenance for hungry Michigan families. Your generosity is so very much appreciated. I give heartfelt thanks to Linda Cook in the Media & Public Relations Division for the excellent job she did in coordinating the food drive for our department. Thanks also go to all of the agency and bureau coordinators who worked with Linda on this endeavor.

Julie Chrysler in Internal Audit is also to be commended for her sure and constant concern for our troops overseas and at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Her most recent Care Package Drive, which ended Nov. 19, resulted in 14 boxes sent and about \$275 collected to help pay for postage and purchase additional items. Thank you, Julie, and thanks to all of you who donated money and needed items for our service men and women.

There are so many other examples of courage and selflessness in our department... our co-workers in the National Guard and the Reserves who have been deployed... those of you who have been recognized for the number of pints of blood you have donated to the Red Cross. The "We Get Letters and E-Mails" section in this newsletter literally overflows with compliments from outside organizations, companies and citizens who recognize the exemplary work you do in service to the residents of our state.

While it is not possible to mention in this column all of the praiseworthy efforts you have undertaken this year, I would like to share with you one other example of the caliber of our DLEG employees. John Robinson, a disabled veterans outreach worker in the Bureau of Workforce Programs, sent this message to his supervisors Donna Cooper and Vicki Burghdoff: "Last week a female veteran was referred to me. She was homeless, didn't have any money and didn't have anywhere to stay. You could tell by her eyes she was totally defeated, just sad looking. Well, to make a long story short, I talked to an employer about her and she was hired the same day. Then I got her \$30 from the vet's center to pay a van service to take her back and forth to work until her first paycheck, and now she's staying at the women's shelter. When she came back to tell me thanks, she had a smile on her face and the feeling I got from that was better than money."

The smile I smiled when I read that e-mail message was matched only by the lump in my throat. And so, as this holiday season approaches, I wish for each of you the gifts of wonder, fulfillment and contentment. They are the best kind.

Sincerely,

David C. Hollister



Michigan LEGWORK

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Articles/photos may be e-mailed to breenl@michigan.gov or faxed to 517/241-1580. The Department of Labor & Economic Growth is an equal opportunity employer/program. This newsletter will be made available in alternate formats on request.



Linda Cook coordinated the Michigan Harvest Gathering for the entire department.

Workers' Comp Employee Helps Widow Collect Benefits

A widow and her son were the recent beneficiaries of Noel Todter's astute work.

A claims auditor with the Workers' Compensation Agency, Noel audits claims that are handled by self-insured employers. His audits are done to ensure that claims are properly reported to the agency and that the claims handler reports a sufficient monetary reserve amount on each claim.

During a recent audit, Noel noticed that death benefits had been terminated to a widow at the end of 500 weeks even though she had a son who was only 15 years old. The employer said it was up to the widow to file a claim for additional benefits, which would have involved hiring an attorney.

In talking with the employer, Noel cited several court cases, which confirmed that benefits should be continued until the minor child's 18th birthday. The employer reconsidered and sent a check for \$16,000 in back benefits to the widow.

She was elated. The widow was unaware that she was entitled to additional benefits on behalf of her son, and in all likelihood, would have never pursued the claim.

Noel went above and beyond and provides a fine example of customer service at its best.

Noel joined the Workers' Compensation Program in 1983, working with the Appeal Board. He has worked directly for the Workers' Compensation Agency since 1987, including time with the Funds Administration. He has been working as a claims auditor since 2001, and this is the first case he's encountered where the benefit amount was terminated prematurely.

He has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Western Michigan University.



Noel Todter

Office of Media Technology

DLEG's Cable Shows Expand Network

Consumer's Corner and *The Job Show* — the Department of Labor & Economic Growth's cable TV programs — can now be seen by thousands of additional viewers.

Nirva Civilus, host of *The Job Show*, began an outreach effort in July to expand the number of cable systems that carry the programs, which are produced by the Office of Media Technology (OMT).

"In July, 54 cable systems were part of the network," said OMT Director David Callanan. "Today, thanks to Nirva's hard work, 67 local access cable TV outlets cablecast *Consumer's Corner* and *The Job Show*, reaching a confirmed subscription base of 2.6 million households. The new areas giving us the greatest increase are Comcast Downriver, with 19 communities, and Benton Harbor/St. Joseph."

The two programs are produced at DLEG's television studio at Cadillac Place in Detroit. They are shown on local or government access channels of cable television systems, and there are no fees paid to the cable companies for this service.



Nirva Civilus interviews Andy Metcalf, director of the Bureau of Commercial Services, during a taping of *The Job Show*.

How to Show Videos with Closed Captions

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is requiring that by the year 2006, 100 percent of the program content on television be closed captioned (CC). The Department of Labor & Economic Growth has adopted an accessible video production policy that states the department will close caption all of its videos beginning December 1, 2004 (see pg. 12).



DLEG Director David C. Hollister interviews Gary Heidel, director of Program Policy, MSHDA, on *Consumer's Corner*.

DLEG uses videos in communicating with internal and external audiences about its mission, programs, products and services. In keeping with federal and state disabilities rights laws and the value of inclusion, it is the intent of DLEG to standardize an approach to the production and presentation of all our videos.

When setting up to show a video for a group meeting, conference, or even for one person, it's important to check out the equipment you'll be using beforehand in case there is a need to show the video with the closed captioning "on."

Making sure the tape you're showing is closed captioned is the first step, but that alone doesn't guarantee you'll be able to see the captions. Displaying closed captions on a TV program or from a tape is a function of your television (not your VCR or DVD player). The Television Decoder Circuitry Act of 1990 mandates that, beginning in July 1993, all televisions manufactured for sale in the U.S. must contain a built-in caption decoder if the picture tube is 13" or larger. This means if the TV you're using was made before 1993, or is smaller than 13", it probably won't show closed captions.

For most televisions, you have to turn the captions on through the remote control. Sometimes this can be an easy and intuitive process. However, every brand and make of television is different, so navigating through the set-up menus sometimes can be equivalent to trying to launch the space shuttle through your TV. If the remote control for your TV is missing, it may not be possible to turn on the closed captions.

Televisions with closed caption decoders were originally designed to allow for captioning in more than one language, although we don't see much of it. *60 Minutes*, which is captioned in both English and Spanish, is one exception. Most televisions will display closed captioning in English on CC1. CC2 would carry any foreign language captions.

Again, displaying closed captions is a function of your TV; however, the growing popularity of DVDs has confused the issue somewhat. While most commercially produced DVDs come with closed captions on them, standards were created very late for DVDs, so there are several different ways to display the captions. In addition to closed captioning, many commercially produced DVDs also support captioning (or subtitles) in multiple languages. These options would be set up through the DVD remote control. Again, every DVD player is different, so navigating through the menus sometimes can be tricky.

The best rule of thumb, as always, is to check out the equipment you'll be using beforehand. It's always easier to figure out a TV or remote control ahead of time rather than when you're standing in front of a room full of people.

If you have questions, please call Steve Kline, manager, Technical Services Unit, Office of Media Technology, at (313) 456-2927, or e-mail KlineSteveT@michigan.gov.

If You Have a Loved One in the Service...

Posters featuring photographs of DLEG employees in the military and employee family members in the military are being designed by Graphic Artist Jim Kremer in Media & Public Relations. Please send photos, including name of individual, branch of service, name and job title of employee, and relationship to employee to: KremerJ@michigan.gov or to Jim at the Ottawa Building, 4th floor. Copies of the posters will be distributed throughout the department and made available to interested persons.

Lansing UIA Staff Decorate T-Shirts for a Cause

Instead of giving the shirts off their backs, 10 staff members with the Unemployment Insurance Agency's (UIA) Problem Resolution Office and Claimant Customer Relations office in Lansing decided to put on Halloween-themed T-shirts and, at the same time, help collect donations for the Michigan Harvest Gathering.

On the Friday before Halloween, staff wore T-shirts they had either purchased or decorated in holiday motif. A secret ballot was held among staff to select the best-looking T-shirts. Top prize went to Cindy Mast, who designed and decorated her shirt. Debbie Fossum and Shemin Blundell captured second and third place, respectively. The lucky trio received various fall and Halloween-themed prizes and candy.

Food donations for the Harvest Gathering were collected during the event, which was organized by Dudley Williams.



Debbie Fossum shows off her Halloween-decorated shirt.



Shemin Blundell proudly displays her shirt, too.



Spiders decorate Cindy Mast's top-prize T-shirt.

Putting Their Kudos on Display

Staff at the Unemployment Insurance Agency's Remote Initial Claims Center (RICC) in Detroit often receive cards, letters and phone calls of thanks from their satisfied customers.

To recognize those staff who receive appreciation for a job well done, the center has their photos and the words of thanks placed on a new "Kudos Board." In addition, recognized staff receive a thank you card and a Kudos candy bar from the center's management team. The photos and cards remain on the board for a month before a new group of staff is recognized.

The board, which was the idea of Deborah Moore, an analyst at the center, has gone over well and is a popular spot for center staff to stop and check out the kudos they and their co-workers have earned.



Deborah Moore, an analyst at the Detroit RICC, places another employee photo on the center's new Kudos Board.

MPSC Holds Food Drive Competition

To encourage donations during the Michigan Harvest Gathering campaign, the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) held a competition to see which division could collect the most food. The Telecommunications Division won with a total of 711 items and will be congratulated at a commission-wide potluck luncheon. Thanks go to April Arman, Administration Section, who took charge of the food drive; Cindy Stephens, Regulated Energy Division, who came up with the competition idea; and the MPSC staff, who came through with generous donations of more than 2,000 food items.

The Three Rings of Security

By Martin D. Alexander, CHS-III

Marty Alexander, the author of our series on homeland security, is a district supervisor at the Lansing District Office of the Michigan Liquor Control Commission Enforcement Division. He has been certified in Homeland Security at Level III by the American College of Forensic Examiners International. He has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and a master's degree in security administration.



Home alone on a cold night, Robin is almost blinded by the glare of headlights as a car approaches her house. She notices the lights turned off as it proceeds slowly to her home, then stops short. Not recognizing the three or four young, boisterous occupants as they exit the car, her heart pounds and her palms begin to sweat.

She checks quickly to ensure the house doors and windows are locked. In doing so, she loses sight of the young men. Searching in vain, she sees only their empty car. Because her driveway light is burned out, it's difficult to see. Admonishing herself, she murmurs, "Wish I'd replaced that bulb sooner."

Robin's mind begins to race. She doesn't know these people. Are they friend or foe? Where are they? Why are they here? What do they want? How long do I wait before calling for help?

Momentarily, heavy banging and loud, mocking laughter is heard at the front door. She retreats to the back kitchen, where she instinctively grabs a kitchen utensil for protection and hides, waiting, feeling unprepared for what's expected. Fear, anxiety and anticipation are nearly as bad as the dread and expectation of confrontation. Her dog, now awake, barks fiercely and scares them off.

The security issue here is deterrence. Proactive, or prior, planning is essential to deter danger.

To plan, consider as many conceivable possibilities that are likely to happen, and add a few more that could. Think like a bad guy who's trying to break into your house. How would he do it? Develop contingency plans to work out preventive measures for each scenario. Use a three-ring approach to develop simple and effective, yet redundant, defensive security systems.

Nearly all people use a recognized three-ring system to enhance the security of their house,

business or school: fences, trees, bushes, road design (the outer perimeter); outer walls, doors and windows (the outer building); and lights, locks and alarms (the inner building). In protective layers, we provide security from real and perceived dangers such as crime, weather, fire and terrorism, to name a few.

The first ring of defense is the outer perimeter. If it looks impenetrable, often the bad guys will not try to enter. They'll usually go on to the next place. In Mexico City, for example, 8 to 10 feet high stone walls, topped with broken glass cemented into place, surround many homes. Because most people are aware of this form of deterrence, climbing over is rare. So, create obstacles.

The outer building is the second ring of defense. Doors and windows should be securely closed and locked. Avoid natural "steps" such as tree branches or a fence too close to the building that could provide an easy access to the unsecured second-floor window. Heavy curtains and shades deter "window shopping" and prevent the intruder from seeing if any valuables inside are worth taking.

The inner building is the third and most important ring of defense. Lights, people or animal noises, and alarms work well as deterrents. If a building is occupied, an intruder often wants to avoid confrontation and being identified. The intruder should be wary or dissuaded of entering the area.

Strive to obtain as much lead-time as possible to deter, detect and delay danger before it arrives. Extra time will allow for an appropriate response. Select obstacles that will deter the intruder from the protected area. Plan each ring to protect the next. Like Robin, you just can't be sure when you'll need these protections. Usually, it's when you least expect it.

Opportunities to Give a Pint

You can help ensure the Red Cross has a sustained and secure blood supply by donating blood at one of the December drives being held in Lansing and Detroit.

A drive will be held at the Ottawa building in Lansing from 9 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 10.

Contact Lori Parr at parrl@michigan.gov or (517) 373-3489.

A blood drive is also being held on the 10th floor of the Fisher building, Detroit, on Monday, Dec. 20, sponsored by ABC Radio (WJR). Contact Diane Cunningham at (313) 873-9701.

200-Plus Veterans Attend "Job Fair Plus"

More than 200 veterans attended Job Fair Plus, held Oct. 14 at the VFW Post in Traverse City. Local Veterans Employment Representative Don Clover and Disabled Veterans Outreach Worker Gary Perkins, Bureau of Workforce Programs, coordinated the event.

The participating veterans met with a number of company representatives looking for workers. They also had an opportunity to talk with Don and Gary about supportive services — the reason the event was titled Job Fair Plus. The plus was the addition of resume assistance, referral to supportive services, and the presence of veterans service officers and Social Security Administration representatives to answer questions and demonstrate the Career Portal Web site.

Employers included the Michigan Army National Guard, the Michigan Maritime Academy, Lowe's, Home Depot, Corporate Security Solutions, Manpower, Progressive Personnel Services, and the Michigan Department of Corrections. The Michigan State Police recruiter was there during the morning of his day off.

The VFW post provided the facility, set up, signage, color guard, snack bar and some of the public relations. The post was also able to gain 11 new members. "It is partnerships like this that make for successful events for both job seekers and employers," said Don.

Gary said, "It was a lot of hard work, but certainly a worthwhile endeavor. This was a learning experience and a building block to grow on for future job fairs."

Carrie Headworth and David Marin from DLEG's Project M.O.V.E.; Neil Cooper, Michigan's veterans coordinator; and Jack Pickard, VFW state commander, also provided assistance.



At Job Fair Plus in Traverse City are (l. to r.): Rob Milton, a job seeker; Carrie Headworth, employment service interviewer; Gary Perkins, disabled veterans outreach worker; and Don Clover, local veterans employment representative.

Video Phone Booth for Deaf Callers Makes a Debut in Traverse City

Sometimes it takes a little longer for innovations to reach Northern Michigan communities. On the other hand, rural community members are strong on collaboration, working together to make a difference. Because of this strong collaboration, Traverse City now has a Video Relay call booth that allows people who are deaf or hard of hearing to make telephone calls using American Sign Language.

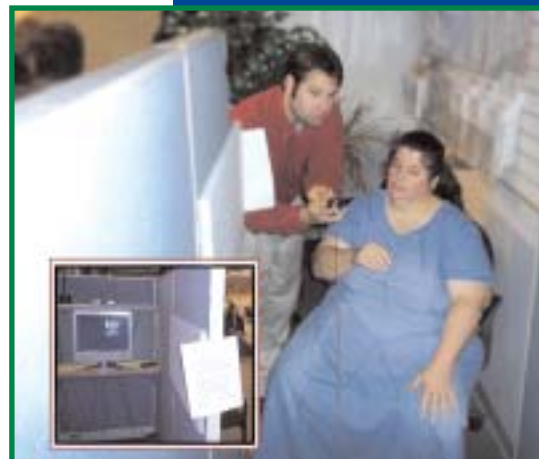
Video Relay Service (VRS) uses Internet video conferencing, with an interpreter/relay operator at another location, to assist people who are deaf or hard of hearing with making telephone calls.

It works like this: A deaf person uses a video call booth, or a high-speed Internet connection with video input from home, to contact an interpreter at the VRS center. The interpreter sees the deaf person's signing, calls the specified telephone number, and interprets for the deaf person to the hearing person on the other end of the line. Everything the hearing person speaks is signed to the deaf caller. Everything the caller signs is spoken to the hearing caller.

The process is more natural and significantly faster than TTY relay services. And the best news is that the service is free.

The Video Relay call booth in Traverse City is located at the Michigan Works! Service Center, 1209 S. Garfield Ave. Michigan Rehabilitation Services, a collaborator on the project, is co-located there. An open house held Nov. 5 introduced the new call booth to people from the region and gave them the opportunity to make Video Relay calls to friends and relatives.

VRS and the call booth are provided by Communication Access Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CACDHH), a statewide agency headquartered in Flint. Other collaborators instrumental in bringing VRS to Northern Michigan are DLEG's Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the GTP Industries Inc. Deaf Services Clearinghouse, and the Northern Michigan Alliance for Independent Living.



Todd Morrison, CACDHH representative, shows Nora Beckett how to use Video Relay Service.

Special Deliveries

Doug Kuras Lauded for Job Candidate Referrals



Celebrating with Doug Kuras (second from left) are Hank Galnor, regional manager, Workforce Programs; Patrick Ford; and Barbara Verran, director, Michigan Works! Service Center, Monroe.

Doug Kuras, business liaison at the Michigan Works! Service Center in Monroe, received a Special Delivery from the Director Oct. 29.

Doug was nominated by Patrick Ford, disabled veterans outreach worker, who, like Doug, works for DLEG's Bureau of Workforce Programs.

Doug was commended for his leadership of the Global Engine Project with DaimlerChrysler, in which concerted efforts

are being made to refer qualified job candidates for work at the company's Global Engine Manufacturing Alliance in Dundee.

DaimlerChrysler Human Resources Generalist Mahala K. Poland sent the following e-mail message to Doug: "We wanted to let you know that we have been making very good progress with team member and team leader hiring. At this point we have hired 33 hourly people and expect another six to shortly join. Your team's efforts have resulted in this magnitude of qualified candidates. We appreciate these efforts in meeting GEMA's team member and team leader needs. In addition, GEMA believes that we have the required number of candidates in the assessment process for about the next year ... Thank you and your staff for the great work on screening and entering qualified candidates into the assessment process. I will remain in touch with you and send you periodic updates on the hiring plan. The GEMA HR Department looks forward to continuing to work with you and your team on the hiring process for the duration of the plant launch."

Congratulations, Doug!

Wayne Weigel Is Appreciated in Washington, D.C.



Gordon Burke (left), director of Operations and Programs, USDOL-VETS, presents Wayne Weigel with a Special Delivery from the Director.

Wayne Weigel, local veterans employment representative, Bureau of Workforce Programs, is currently assigned to an Intergovernmental Personnel Act position in the U. S. Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service (USDOL-VETS) in Washington, D.C. Wayne is appreciated so much in Washington that he has received a Special Delivery from the Director.

Kelly P. Robinson with USDOL-VETS nominated Wayne for the award, stating, "Wayne has become a key player at the VETS. His main responsibility is to manage the Transition Assistance Program worldwide. He handles a multi-million dollar contract with NAMS, which VETS contracts with to provide TAP workshops worldwide. He has also been coordinating efforts to complete a Memorandum of Understanding among the Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Labor. This MOU will outline each department's responsibilities for TAP worldwide. On top of all this, Wayne is required to keep close tabs on TAP statistics concerning number of workshops, number of participants and their breakdown, and costs. This information can be requested at any moment to be used for a budget discussion or a Congressional briefing.

"Wayne always has a positive attitude and tries to see how things 'can' be, and always, always gives 110% while representing USDOL-VETS as a state of Michigan employee. Wayne's dedication and hard work have been an asset to this organization and we are thankful that the state of Michigan has allowed us to borrow him."

Congratulations, Wayne!

Maria Redner Recognized for Calm Demeanor, Willingness to Assist Others

“She goes beyond the call of duty,” and for that Maria Redner was recently surprised with a Special Delivery from the Director award.

In saying why she nominated Maria, a lead worker at the Unemployment Insurance Agency’s Detroit Remote Initial Claims Center (RICC), Sherri Bucholtz said, “Maria is always cool and calm despite many interruptions, and she never gets upset. She’s a very patient person.”

Sherri, an unemployment insurance examiner, went on to say that Maria is a great lead worker, who will assist anyone when asked no matter how busy she is.

While staff are learning how to adjudicate unemployment claims, Sherri wrote, “Maria’s constantly helping and is still always pleasant to everyone.”

Maria’s qualities of patience, pleasantness and willingness to help are welcome qualities in a RICC’s busy work environment.


Congratulations, Maria!



Sharing the moment with Maria Redner (second from right) are: Chris Peretto, UIA Customer Service director; Gwen Spence, Detroit RICC director; Sherri Bucholtz; and David Graves, RICC team manager.

'Special Delivery from the Director'

I would like to nominate the following staff member to receive a 'Great Job' acknowledgement from Director Hollister



Name of Nominee	Submitted By
Office/Bureau	Classification
Telephone	Office Location

The reason I am nominating this person:

Bureau/Office Director	Date
------------------------	------

Bureau/Office Director: Please sign and return to DLEG Media & Public Relations, Ottawa Bldg., 4th Floor, Lansing 48909 - Fax: 517-241-1580

We Get Letters ... and E-Mails!



Sue Carow, a counselor at the Marquette/Upper Peninsula office of Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), was complimented in this letter from a former client: "Sue treated me with absolute respect. She really cared about me and made sure I was happy with services. I would not have gotten this far without her. I am glad to have had her enter my life, and I feel I am lucky to have had her as my counselor. Thank you for all of your help, and I am grateful these services are available."

Mikal Brown, a counselor at the Flint MRS office, received this note: "Mikal, I would like to thank you so much for all that you did for me while I was in school and after I got my new job. I'm so glad you were able to help me with my dream. I will never be able to thank you enough for all of your help. Thank you so much!"

Rose Harrell, a counselor at the Detroit Fort Street office of MRS, was complimented in this letter: "I'm writing this letter to give recognition to Ms. Harrell. I was a client of Ms. Harrell. I want to just thank her for helping me. She is an excellent rehabilitation counselor. She provided assistance wherever she could. She was instrumental in my obtaining and maintaining employment. She was very helpful in boosting my confidence and encouraging me to know that I still have a chance. I want to take the time to let her know on paper how thankful I am."

Bob Clark, Management Information Systems, Management & Technical Services Division, MIOSHA, received a letter of appreciation from the manager of a safety and health service company in Ontario: "I want to tell you how helpful **Terrilyn Jones** has been to our U.S. Safety and Health Conference. We planned a two-hour presentation on OSHA 300 Logs for our attendees and Ms. Jones assisted us with the scenarios to use for review, suggested ways to clarify the scenarios and reviewed our final version. The entire time we worked with her, she was professional, friendly and promptly returned our phone calls and gave us valuable feedback. She was concerned that our presentation would be top notch. Thanks to her, it was."

The health, safety and environmental manager for TRW recently sent an e-mail message to Michigan Voluntary Protection Program Specialist **Doug Kimmel**, MIOSHA, stating that one of the company's employees discovered an unguarded spindle in her workplace while cleaning. She said the reason she recognized the problem was that the company's safety team had recently attended a MIOSHA safety and health class. MIOSHA officials are glad to hear that companies are taking advantage of safety and health seminars presented by its Consultation, Education and Training Division — and that attendees are able to apply the knowledge in the workplace.

A supervisor at a construction site in Dearborn wrote to commend Senior Safety Officer **Richard Kawucha**, Construction Safety & Health Division, MIOSHA, for his professionalism: "I cannot overstate how much I appreciated Richard's professional approach. It could not have been more clear that his distinct objective was to make the site a safer work place ... As long as MIOSHA sends quality professionals such as Richard Kawucha out into the field, unknown benefactors will not suffer injuries or death as a direct result of the work of these professionals. So on behalf of the unknown benefactors, let me extend my thanks and appreciation to Richard, your office and your inspectors for performing such important work in our community."

Joe Barela, Consultation, Education and Training (CET) Division, MIOSHA, received the following thank you from Hardtech Company: "I wanted to express my appreciation for your time and efforts in assisting SSAB and me personally with the efforts to advance our facility and safety culture. It is very helpful to have the expertise and the presence of MIOSHA to move the facility forward. I hold you in distinction for your efforts and accomplishments."

Safety Consultant **Richard Zdeb**, CET Division, MIOSHA, received the following thank you from McNaughton McKay Electric: "The Safety Seminar held last Thursday was a success, and thank you for your participation in this training. We would like to extend the offer to attend and participate in future safety training at McNaughton McKay."

Ruth Hindman, CET Supervisor, MIOSHA, received a thank you note from Cape Industries for CET activity conducted by **Jennifer Clark-Denson** and **Sherry Scott**: "I just wanted to reiterate what a great team that you have ... Thank you for sending such wonderful, highly intelligent, motivated, customer-service friendly, and most of all helpful and knowledgeable individuals to help Cape Industries achieve a safer environment for our employees to work in."

Safety Consultant **Rob Stacy**, CET Division, MIOSHA, received this thank you from Grand Valley State University: "Thank you very much for conducting the fork lift training. I appreciate your excellent presentations. I also received very positive comments from your previous training 'When MIOSHA Visits.' We look forward to your future training presentations."

Safety Consultant **Bill Gasser**, CET Division, MIOSHA, received a note from a firm in Traverse City: "Thanks again for your visit. The CET program is working well for us and we intend to use it fully at every opportunity. Initially, the idea of inviting a MIOSHA representative of any kind to visit this worksite was a challenging sell. Your

[More] Letters ... and E-Mails!

presentation to the subs was right on the money and overcame a lot of institutional bias. We're safer and our work culture is improving in large part because of your visits."

Sherry Scott, industrial hygienist, CET Division, MIOSHA, was thanked in this note from the Upper Peninsula School Nurses: "Thank you so much for presenting at our conference! Taking the time to travel to the U.P. to share your expertise with us is appreciated more than we can tell you!"

Jennifer Gollbach, document examiner, Corporation Division, Commercial Services, received this e-mail message: "I just wanted to say thanks again for helping me navigate my way through the process of registering my business with the state. It was refreshing to deal with someone polite, professional and sincerely willing to help. It seems that too often, people just want to pass problems to the next department. I appreciate your desire to solve them."

Jim Farhat, document examiner, Corporation Division, Commercial Services, received kudos from a customer who wrote: "Jim — Thank you so much for all of your assistance with our recent filing. Your patience and expertise were greatly appreciated. As you can see from the enclosed press release, this filing was very important to our clients and we couldn't have done it without your help."

The same customer also wrote to Jim Farhat's supervisor, **Jim Lotoszinski**, to commend Jim's work: "I am writing to you to compliment one of your employees, Jim Farhat. Our firm has numerous ELF filings with the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth and we dealt with Mr. Farhat on many occasions. Jim has always been very helpful whenever we have had any questions regarding complicated filings. He is extremely knowledgeable, easy to work with, and always responds in a timely fashion. Jim goes above and beyond to assist us with our filings and we appreciate all that he has done. Jim is a credit to your department."



Professional Activities

Congratulations to the Benton Harbor office of Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), which was honored with a Partner Award on Oct. 20 from Gateway, Inc., a community rehabilitation organization in Berrien County. The award was presented at Gateway's annual dinner. In addition, Marsha Bockman, president of Gateway, said in the organization's FY 2004 annual report: "Gateway extends a thank you to **Felicia Flow-ers** and the counselors and staff at Michigan Rehabilitation Services and a special thank you to MRS regional manager **Margie Hojara-Hadsell** for continued support and guidance."

Rosanne Renauer, manager of Youth Services and Community Alliances, MRS, was awarded the 2004 Guy F. Hubbard Award for Outstanding Leadership in Rehabilitation Oct. 14 by the National Association of Rehabilitation Leadership, a division of the National Rehabilitation Association. Rosanne has secured federal and local grant funding for special projects in Michigan including Tech 2000, Detroit Employment and Empowerment Zone, the Michigan Transition Initiative and MI Connections. She has designed and created resources for educators, staff and the public such as the Monday Bulletin on Services to Youth, an electronic newsletter with a continuing circulation of over 1,000. She is a founding member of the first Women and Disabilities Conference in Michigan with the Developmental Disabilities

Institute. She leads MRS's efforts in adult literacy, partnering with Adult Education and the Bridges to Practice, a National Institute for Literacy program. Congratulations, Rosanne!

Medical Career Fair 2004 was co-sponsored by Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) and Saginaw-Midland-Bay Michigan Works! at the Howard Johnson Inn in Saginaw Sept. 22. Local employers, colleges, and medical training professionals provided valuable information on careers in the medical field to interested participants. **Jim Garrison, Linda Hartgrove, Paul Kuehl, Holly LaBelle, Alexa Matthews,** and **Leonard Meisel** of MRS helped plan and carry out the event.

Congratulations to **Sarah Utich**, an MRS employment placement specialist in Macomb County who was honored twice this fall. At the Oct. 20 Employer Awards Breakfast sponsored by MRS's Macomb County District, Sarah was recognized with a Certificate of Appreciation for her expertise in developing close working relationships with employers that have resulted in many job placements for MRS clients. In addition, Sarah was presented with the Placement Specialist of the Year Award by the Job Placement Division of the Michigan Rehabilitation Association at the Michigan Rehabilitation Conference in Traverse City Nov. 4.



Rosanne Renauer

Accessible Video Policy Announced

The Department of Labor & Economic Growth has adopted an Accessible Video Production Policy to help the department comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the value of inclusion. The policy takes effect December 1, 2004.

"It is hoped that with this policy and the accompanying procedures, all DLEG agencies and bureaus will use video media that are accessible, or make appropriate accommodations to assure that people with disabilities get the full value of information presented on the media," said David Callanan, director, Office of Media Technology. "The procedures document is intended to be a living document that will be updated as we gain experience in providing access and move toward excellence."

The Office of Media Technology provides media support services to DLEG staff and can be reached at (313) 456-2929.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH ACCESSIBLE VIDEO PRODUCTION POLICY

Effective date: 12/1/04



Background:

The Department of Labor and Economic Growth uses videos in communicating to internal and external audiences about its mission, programs, products and services. In keeping with Federal and State disabilities rights laws and the value of inclusion, it is the intent of this policy to standardize an approach to the production of video media.

POLICY:

VIDEO CAPTIONING AND AUDIO DESCRIPTION

1. All training and informational video recorded productions which support the agency's mission*, regardless of format that contain speech or other audio information necessary for the comprehension of the content, shall be open or closed captioned.
2. All training and informational video recordings which support the agency's mission*, regardless of format, that contain visual information necessary for the comprehension of the content, shall be audio described.
3. Display of presentation of alternate text presentation or audio descriptions shall be user-selectable unless permanent.
4. The Office of Media Technology (OMT) is responsible for implementing this policy and will maintain procedures for producing, commissioning or otherwise procuring video media. Questions on this policy may be directed to Dave Callanan at (313) 456-2929.

* Note: Video recordings intended for internal investigative processes and/or documentation such as depositions, video recorded inspections, etc., are not included in the scope of this policy.

Approved: D. C. Hollister Dated: 12-14-04

* Note: To view the procedures document, please click on http://www.cis.state.mi.us/dleg_faqs.htm.

ADA Coordinators' Seminar Focuses on Accessible Meetings

Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm kicked off an Oct. 12 training session for all departmental Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) coordinators. She provided welcoming comments and underscored the commitment of her administration to full ADA compliance. The governor particularly emphasized how important it is that all meetings and events hosted by state government be accessible to all people, including persons with disabilities.

Patrick M. Cannon, state ADA coordinator and director of the Michigan Commission for the Blind, organized the training session, along with the Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, the Office of the State Employer and the Department of Civil Rights.

The session, titled "Ensuring Meetings and Temporary Events Are Accessible: Engaging All Participants," was presented by Robin Jones,

director of the Great Lakes ADA and Accessible Information Technology Center in Chicago. She is our regional expert on the ADA, and the presentation, as well as her examples and anecdotes, was very informative.

DLEG is currently considering how best to communicate the ADA mandate for accessible meetings to key persons responsible for planning or organizing DLEG events to assure they are accessible to persons with disabilities. If you have any questions on how best to make a DLEG event accessible, please call DLEG ADA Coordinator Myrtle Gregg-LaFay at (517) 335-5824.



Tish Kingaby and Patrick Cannon, both with the Michigan Commission for the Blind, were among those who enjoyed Robin Jones' presentation about accessibility.

Idea Sprang from Vision & Values Sessions

Construction Codes & Fire Safety Provides Training for Administrative Support Staff

The Bureau of Construction Codes and Fire Safety (BCCFS) provided a daylong training program Nov. 2 specifically designed for bureau administrative support staff. The program was developed from suggestions made by staff during last year's vision and values sessions. The bureau had not provided training exclusively for this group of employees since moving staff from the Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council and the merger of the bureau with the Office of Fire Safety.

The agenda for the day included short workshops designed to improve staff knowledge of bureau and department programs and processes and wellness/stress management training. BCCFS Director Henry Green said training is too often geared exclusively toward the technical aspects of one's job.

This program was designed not only to assist staff in improving their knowledge of the department, bureau programs and processes, and increase their level of competency in various areas, but also to reinforce the importance of an employee's overall health and wellness to the success of the bureau.

The fast-paced, information-packed day included an overview of program areas by each bureau manager and the opportunity to ask questions; MAIN, HRMN, EXCEL, OUTLOOK, and Calendar training; time management; wellness; and exercising/stress relieving techniques that can be done at one's desk. Many talented individuals from within the bureau, other DLEG bureaus/agencies, and state agencies such as DIT and Civil Service exhibited their talents and expertise, helping to make the day a huge success.



SUTA Dumping Is Major Topic

UIA Field Auditors Hold Annual Conference



Listening to one of the conference speakers are (front row, l. to r.): Mark Pickelhaupt, area supervisor; Barbara Travis, field auditor; and Jeanette Dorsey, area supervisor. In the second row are Phyllis Dillard, district supervisor, and Diana Long, departmental technician.

The Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) recently held its annual Employer Compliance Conference. Some 65 participants attended. In addition to those from Employer Compliance, others at the meeting included staff from UIA's Tax Office, Fraud Investigations Unit and SUTA Dumping Project.

Employer Compliance staff audit employer unemployment tax records to ensure they are in compliance with Michigan's unemployment insurance (UI) tax program.

The conference gives Employer Compliance staff — who are based throughout the state — an opportunity to discuss common issues. One of the major topics at the meeting was SUTA dumping.

SUTA (state unemployment tax act) dumping is a tax evasion plan involving the manipulation of an employer's UI tax rate to achieve a lower rate, and thereby pay lower UI taxes. Typically, SUTA dumping occurs when a business transfers payroll out of an existing company or organization to a new or different organization solely or primarily to reduce UI taxes.

DLEG Deputy Director Dave Plawecki identified SUTA dumping as a major priority for UIA and said it is harmful for a number of reasons.

A prime detriment is the damage it does to the state's UI trust fund. UIA estimates the trust fund is losing between \$62 and \$95 million a year because of SUTA dumping. With fewer dollars going into the trust fund, there is less money available to pay unemployment benefits. It also gives employers who SUTA dump an unfair competitive cost advantage and spreads their "unpaid" tax burden among other employers.

In addition to learning about the types of SUTA dumping that occur, the field auditors had an opportunity to look at and discuss some case studies based on real examples. They were also told what to look for during employer audits that would help them identify if SUTA dumping is occurring.

A new federal law requires states to amend their UI laws to close any loopholes that may allow SUTA dumping to occur. Michigan's legislature is expected to consider anti-SUTA dumping legislation this fall.

To combat the problem, UIA has established a special SUTA unit in its Tax Office. Unit staff are already starting to identify potential SUTA dumping cases.

Employer Compliance staff, fraud investigators and the SUTA unit will be in the forefront of the agency's efforts to battle the problem.

Margaret Evans Takes on Adjudications Coordinator Role

Margaret Evans, a manager at the Unemployment Insurance Agency's (UIA) Remote Initial Claims (RIC) Center in Saginaw, has taken on the temporary post of adjudications coordinator for the agency.

Customer Service Director Chris Peretto said the position will last for a year and was set up to help during the current transition period, as new adjudications staff become more experienced and familiar with the new processes and technologies the agency is using.

As adjudications coordinator, Evans will develop plans for improving UIA's desired level of achievement for job separation and non-separation issues, for managing the adjudication workload, and for improving scores for benefit timeliness and quality.

In addition, she will look for possible training issues and will communicate information about adjudication concerns to RIC center managers through weekly e-mails.

